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E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: OPDC, PGOV, BN
SUBJECT: LETTER FROM PRESIDENT YAYI TO SECRETARY RICE

REF: COTONOU 72

¶1. Post received on January 30, 2008, via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a letter addressed to Secretary Rice from President Yayi. The letter was dated January 2, 2008. An identical letter was sent to President Bush (reftel). Post sent a copy via e-mail to AF/W and a hard copy via pouch to AF/W.

¶2. Post's informal translation of the letter:

Madame Secretary of State:

As part of the efforts to attain the political, social and economic development of Africa, the African Union has designed and is implementing the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), an ambitious program equipped with the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) that constitutes its cornerstone, as an instrument for the promotion of democracy, rule of law and good governance.

The Memorandum of Understanding on the African Peer Review Mechanism and the Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance adopted at the AU conference on July 8, 2002 in Durban, South Africa laid down for the Member States of the APRM forum the steps to be taken in order to achieve the objectives contained in the two documents, in line with the principles and objectives of this Mechanism.

Benin which adhered to the APRM on March 31, 2004 has just completed the review process that was conducted by a team of high-ranking African officials headed by Mrs. Marie-Angelique SAVANE, the president of the Panel of Eminent Persons for West Africa. This team traveled all over the country to enquire about the Beninese people's concerns and aspirations.

This phase was followed by a self-assessment that resulted in nationwide consultations.

During this phase, all the components of the populations at the levels of the departments, the communes, the towns and the villages had the opportunity to express views about the political, economic and social situation prevailing in Benin and to map out perspectives.

All the phases set forth in the Memorandum having been completed, Benin is scheduled to present its report by the end of January 2008, in Addis Ababa at the 8th APRM Forum.

On this occasion, I will be given the opportunity to present to peers the economic, political and social progress noted by the people of Benin, the challenges they have to face and their relating needs, and to gather peer recommendations with a view to consolidating the Action Plan drafted at the completion of the Benin review process, according to the principles and objectives contained in the Mechanism. I will have the pleasure to send this report to you in due time for your appreciation.

Besides, I intend, on completion of this exercise, to put in place the National Commission on Governance in which I will involve all

the nation's forces, in the framework of the implementation of this plan that will cost \$2,388,880,000 over the period running from 2008 to 2015.

The Government and the people of Benin would greatly appreciate your personal support, that of your government and that of your great people in achieving efficiently the objectives set in the Plan.

I reiterate my appreciation regarding the support you and your government continually bring to Benin in the framework of its development program.

Yours sincerely,
/s/ Dr. Boni Yayi

Her Excellency
Madame Condoleezza RICE
Secretary of State of the United States of America

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WASHINGTON DC

¶3. End informal translation.

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